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C O N F I D E N T I A L DHAKA 003341

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [BG](#)

SUBJECT: CDA RAISES ISSUES WITH FOREIGN MINISTER KHAN

REF: DHAKA 3176

Classified By: CDA Judith Chammas, Reason(s): 1.4 (b),(d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: CDA paid courtesy call on FM Morshed Khan and discussed several issues: Bangladeshi approval of remaining UN anti-terrorism conventions, their draft anti-Terrorism law, Bangladesh security services harassment of USG labor programs, AFL-CIO petition to lift BDG's GSP status, the Kibria murder investigation status and the Bangladesh road show. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (C) On July 6, CDA with poloff (notetaker) made a courtesy call on Foreign Minister Morshed Khan and raised a number of issues:

--Bangladesh ratification of remaining UN Terrorist conventions. Khan said that 11 have been approved by the cabinet and that "no further steps" are needed. He has requested a cabinet meeting on the 12th convention related to terrorism financing but noted he wanted a definition of terrorism from the UN. He said no action can be taken on the 13th convention until the convention is formally open, and then we "need only sign it."

--Bangladesh's "Prevention of anti-Terrorism" draft law. The Home Ministry has provided us with a copy of the bill and we are concerned about language that would only repeat the Special Powers Act, which the BNP promised last election to repeal. Charge told the Foreign Minister. Khan protested "but you have your Patriot Act," and sidestepping the question, said they are currently upgrading their Criminal Procedure Code (CRPC). He asked Embassy to speak to Law Minister.

--Allegations of National Security Intelligence (NSI) harassment of American supported Labor program organizations and their personnel (Ref A). Charge noted raising the same issue with Kamal Siddiqui, Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister. Khan responded off handedly that the NSI "asking for information is OK but threats" would be another matter. He agreed to look into the matter.

--AFL-CIO petitioning to lift Bangladesh's GSP status because of problems associated with implementing Bangladesh's EPZ law. The Foreign Minister replied that there is a "change in the mental framework of the AFL-CIO because of the economy. They only want to keep their jobs but not improve things."

--Investigation into the murder of S.A.M.S Kibria, MP. The Charge noted that we appreciate the Prime Minister standing by her commitment of access to the alleged killers of Kibria, including A.K.M. Abdul Qayyum. Charge asked about the circumstance under which the FBI might be able to talk to the accused, Qayyum, alone, asking if a Bangladesh Court Order would permit an interview of Qayyum. Khan responded cautiously, saying that the law does not permit foreigners to interview prisoners but that he "wants full transparency" and thanked us for our efforts to date. He promised to keep us informed on the matter.

--The Bangladesh Economic Road Show, now scheduled to take place in October, noting that the exact cities have not been determined. Khan made no response on this issue.

[1](#)3. (C) Foreign Minister Khan raised the issue of United Nations reform, referring to inclusion of additional permanent members to the security council. He noted that the Group of Four (G4) plans to table a proposal soon. He said that Bangladesh "doesn't want reform so fast" that they are concerned that the reform agenda will be "hijacked" for other's (meaning India's) benefit.

[1](#)4. (C) Comment: We are asking the MFA to confirm via dip note that Bangladesh has approved the UN Counter Terrorism conventions.

CHAMMAS